

T H E E C O N O M Y

In this presentation, when we use the term "economy" we are speaking of a stage in the city's development, as well as the economic system characteristic of that stage. This definition is most apt for Jacksonville, for the economy of the city is in a somewhat level stage following a remarkable phase of transition. We can't tell too much about the past economy in quantitative terms simply because the city was a town too small for the Bureau of the Census or other agencies to report data. As for the future, there are certain more or less constant factors that we can deal with, but there are also so very many factors that depend upon local decisions and action as well as upon national and international events.

This report describes and inventories as much of the economy of the city as available data allows. It serves the following purposes:

1. As a historical document to be kept up to date and referred to in future years. Every city and town in the United States should keep detailed records of as many economic facts as possible, for how else can its progress and status be determined? All business concerns, even athletic associations, keep statistical records in order that trends may be determined and other comparisons made; yet, very little is known about the economy of corporate communities simply because data for measurements have not been kept.
2. As a document for use in evaluating economic status and potential.
3. As a guide to be used by civic officials and others in planning for the future. In serving this purpose it also contains suggestions and starting points for community action, but it does not purport to be a plan of development. The latter should stem from appropriate organizations within the community.

A more complete report would be desirable in terms of statistical data, but it is necessary to take what is available from federal and state data-gathering agencies. Even if the large amounts of money, time, and personnel were available for original research and data-gathering in Jacksonville, such information would be of limited usefulness unless it could be compared with other cities and areas. It is this need for comparability of information that makes it necessary to rely upon standard data sources.

However, statistics do not tell the whole story. Doubtless there are many individuals in Jacksonville's business circles who know more about the present stage of development than can be outlined in a report such as this one, based as it is upon cold statistical data. This is particularly true with regard to the future,